MEPS-IC Cognitive Interview Protocol
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Research Questions to Address:
- Is the requested information available in respondent's records?
- Do respondents have issues with comprehending the terminology used in the questions?
- How burdensome are the questions?

Expected Length of Interview: 20-30 minutes

Introduction:
- Explain purpose of call: to get feedback on potential new questions for the MEPS-IC
- Explain that we are not testing the respondent – we only want information
- Permission to record discussion (when taping)? Have R agree to recording on tape.
- Explain that MEPS is not the cause of HealthCare Reform and that the survey has been active for 16 years (If topic arises)

Before the Questions:
- Thank respondent for completing the survey and participating in test questions.
- What was your experience completing this year's MEPS-IC?

Specific Probes for Items of Interest:

Item 1
- What is this item asking for, in your opinion?
- How would you go about completing this item?
- Do you have access to all the information you need, or would you need to get help from others?
- *(If need help)* Who would you contact? Where is s/he located in the company? What is her/his role?   How would you communicate the request? How would s/he return the data to you? Would you attempt to validate the response they gave you in any way, for example by comparing it to other data you had?
- What records would you use to answer this question?
- *(If sent paper draft)* Do you recall seeing the instructions associated with this item? Did you read them?
- *(If read instructions)* Were you looking for anything specific? Did you find what you were looking for? Were the instructions helpful or not helpful?
- Were there any terms that seemed strange or confusing to you?
- *(If yes)* Which ones? How can we clarify that?
- On a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being very easy and 5 being very difficult, how would you rate the difficulty of this question?
- On a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being easily accessible and 5 being not at all accessible, how would you rate the accessibility of this question?

- *(Refer R to current form)* If this question were added to the MEPS-10 form in Section D as Item 2, would that location make sense to you? Is there another location that would make more sense?
- Prior to this call, were you aware of Health Care Exchanges or the Tax Credit for Small Employers? How about the Affordable Care Act (ACA)?

Item 2

- What is this item asking for, in your opinion?
- How would you go about completing this item?
- Do you have access to all the information you need, or would you need to get help from others?
- *(If need help)* Who would you contact? Where is s/he located in the company? What is her/his role?   How would you communicate the request? How would s/he return the data to you? Would you attempt to validate the response they gave you in any way, for example by comparing it to other data you had?
- What records would you use to answer this question?
- *(If sent paper draft)* Do you recall seeing the instructions associated with this item? Did you read them?
- *(If read instructions)* Were you looking for anything specific? Did you find what you were looking for? Were the instructions helpful or not helpful?
- Were there any terms that seemed strange or confusing to you?
- *(If yes)* Which ones? How can we clarify that?
- On a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being very easy and 5 being very difficult, how would you rate the difficulty of this question?
- On a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being easily accessible and 5 being not at all accessible, how would you rate the accessibility of this question?
- *(Refer R to current form)* If this question were added to the MEPS-10 form in Section C as Item 7(d), would that location make sense to you? Is there another location that would make more sense?
- What is your reaction to being asked an additional breakout after completing the three current breakouts (7a-c)?

Item 3

- What is this item asking for, in your opinion?
- How would you go about completing this item?
- Do you have access to all the information you need, or would you need to get help from others?
- *(If need help)* Who would you contact? Where is s/he located in the company? What is her/his role?   How would you communicate the request? How would s/he return the data to you? Would you attempt to validate the response they gave you in any way, for example by comparing it to other data you had?
- What records would you use to answer this question?
- *(If sent paper draft)* Do you recall seeing the instructions associated with this item? Did you read them?

- *(If read instructions)* Were you looking for anything specific? Did you find what you were looking for? Were the instructions helpful or not helpful?
- Were there any terms that seemed strange or confusing to you?
- *(If yes)* Which ones? How can we clarify that?
- On a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being very easy and 5 being very difficult, how would you rate the difficulty of this question?
- On a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being easily accessible and 5 being not at all accessible, how would you rate the accessibility of this question?
- *(Refer R to current form)* If this question were added to the MEPS-10 form in Section D, before question 1b, would that location make sense to you? Is there another location that would make more sense?
- What does "wellness incentive" mean to you?
- Are there any additional programs or incentives that your organization offers?

Item 4
- What is this item asking for, in your opinion?
- How would you go about completing this item?
- Do you have access to all the information you need, or would you need to get help from others?
- *(If need help)* Who would you contact? Where is s/he located in the company? What is her/his role? How would you communicate the request? How would s/he return the data to you? Would you attempt to validate the response they gave you in any way, for example by comparing it to other data you had?
- What records would you use to answer this question?
- *(If sent paper draft)* Do you recall seeing the instructions associated with this item? Did you read them?
- *(If read instructions)* Were you looking for anything specific? Did you find what you were looking for? Were the instructions helpful or not helpful?
- Were there any terms that seemed strange or confusing to you?
- *(If yes)* Which ones? How can we clarify that?
- On a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being very easy and 5 being very difficult, how would you rate the difficulty of this question?
- On a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being easily accessible and 5 being not at all accessible, how would you rate the accessibility of this question?
- *(Refer R to current form)* If this question were added to the MEPS-10(s) form in the Self-Insured Plan Information section after question 6b, would that location make sense to you? Is there another location that would make more sense?
- Is there a specific reason that your establishment/company chose to self-insure and purchase stop-loss coverage?
- What were the specific criteria used, by your establishment/company, when choosing an attachment point?

Item 5

- What is this item asking for, in your opinion?
- How would you go about completing this item?
- Do you have access to all the information you need, or would you need to get help from others?
- *(If need help)* Who would you contact? Where is s/he located in the company? What is her/his role? How would you communicate the request? How would s/he return the data to you? Would you attempt to validate the response they gave you in any way, for example by comparing it to other data you had?
- What records would you use to answer this question?
- *(If sent paper draft)* Do you recall seeing the instructions associated with this item? Did you read them?
- *(If read instructions)* Were you looking for anything specific? Did you find what you were looking for? Were the instructions helpful or not helpful?
- Were there any terms that seemed strange or confusing to you?
- *(If yes)* Which ones? How can we clarify that?
- On a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being very easy and 5 being very difficult, how would you rate the difficulty of this question?
- On a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being easily accessible and 5 being not at all accessible, how would you rate the accessibility of this question?
- *(Refer R to current form)* If this question were added to the MEPS-10(s) form in the Payments section after Item 19, would that location make sense to you? Is there another location that would make more sense?
- Were you aware that the Affordable Care Act prohibits annual and lifetime limits on the dollar value of benefits, but it doesn't prohibit such limits on the number of services or items?

Wrap Up

- How long do you think it would take you to complete the questions we just discussed (total time, not elapsed time)?
- Are you the best person to answer these questions?
- Overall, on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being very easy and 5 being very difficult, how easy or difficult would you say these questions are?
- Which questions were easier, more difficult?
- Are there any additional questions that you believe should be asked?

Thank respondent for their help.